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species of *Zapus*. (2.) That this species, usually referred to the *Muridæ*, differs from the *Muridæ* to a degree warranting its recognition as a distinct family, as was done by Dr. Gill in 1872. Its principal characters are the presence of an upper premolar not found in *Muridæ* proper, the different and peculiar construction of the ante-orbital foramen, and the saltatorial development of the hind limbs. (3.) That none of the various generic names that had been applied to this species were tenable, according to recognized rules of nomenclature. He then proceeds to show why the former generic appellations of *Meriones*, *Jaculus*, *Dipus*, and *Gerbillus* are inapplicable, and proposes the new one of *Zapus*, in allusion to its large hind feet. The adoption of this name for the genus he considers as necessitating the changing of the family name from *Jaculidæ* to *Zapodidæ*. Then follows the generic and specific synonymy, amounting to one and a half pages, the latter embracing more than a dozen specific names, four of which have had, at different times, considerable prominence. Detailed descriptions are also given of the cranial, dental, and external characters of the genus, with a notice of its geographical distribution, and remarks on its synonymy.

BRINTON'S MYTHS OF THE NEW WORLD.<sup>1</sup>—“Picking painfully amid the ruins of a race gone to wreck centuries ago, rejecting much foreign rubbish and scrutinizing each stone that lies around, if we still are unable to rebuild the edifice in its pristine symmetry, yet we can at least discern and trace the ground plan and outlines of the fane.” This is what the author has most successfully done, and the results of his studies are attractively embodied in the handsome volume before us. Freed from the false interpretations so frequently placed upon them, we have here given us what certainly can be accepted as a very correct idea of the mental condition and peculiarity of those strange tribes of men, the so-called Indians of North and South America. Chapters II. to X. inclusive cover the fascinating field of study suggested by the ideas of God among the Red race; Sacred Numbers, The Symbol of the Bird and Serpent, Myths of Water, Fire, Thunder, and the Religion of Sex; also the subject of their Supreme Gods, The Myths of Creation, the Deluge, Nature's Epochs and the Last Day. Chapters VIII. and IX. are devoted to the subject of the origin of man and the soul and its destiny, as these vexed questions of our day were looked upon by the Red men, and to us are the most entertaining chapters of the work. The author traces back the myths of the Red men generally back to the one solar myth, and disposes of the personality of their god-like heroes, as Quetzalcoatl, Viracocha, and Michabo.

The opening chapter, a general consideration of the Red race, is not, to us, quite so satisfactory as the body of the work. While a most excellent *résumé* of the proofs of the antiquity of American man is given,

<sup>1</sup> *The Myths of the New World*. A Treatise on the Symbolism and Mythology of the Red Race of America. By D. G. BRINTON, A. M., M. D. Second Edition. revised. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1876. \$2.50.

such as his *isolation*, being "cut off time out of mind from the rest of the world," and the fact that "the remains of primeval art and the impress he made upon nature bespeak for man a residence in the New World coeval with the most distant events of history," the author, if we understand him aright, adopts the theory of the unity of the human race. If by unity is meant a common origin from one creative centre, and that a creation *de novo*, rather than derivative, then we dissent. Indeed, reasons are given in every chapter of the work, for believing that the Red race of America never had any intercourse, or bore any relationship to other peoples of any portion of the globe, unless we trace man back so far into time past that we see him the occupant of continents not now existing as such. A word, and we have done. On page 35, Dr. Brinton states that "not a tittle of evidence is on record to carry the age of man in America beyond the present geological epoch." In this connection we would call attention to the remark of the late Professor Wyman, on page 45 of *Fresh-Water Shell-Mounds of Florida*, as follows: "The ancient remains found in California . . . by Professor J. D. Whitney, and referred by him to the tertiary period," etc., etc. To this is added an important foot-note, that "the ample evidence collected by Professor Whitney, but not yet published, substantiates the opinion given above with regard to age." We have, therefore, something more than a tittle of such evidence, and we are carried back to a time when man in America was even too primitive to originate those curious myths which afterwards became so marked a feature of their lives, and which Dr. Brinton has most successfully interpreted.

RECENT BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS. — *Prehistoric Man. Researches into the Origin of Civilization in the Old and New Worlds.* By Daniel Wilson. Third edition, revised and enlarged, with illustrations. 2 vols. London: Macmillan & Co. 1876. 8vo, pp. 399, 401.

List of Skeletons and Crania in the Section of Comparative Anatomy of the United States Army Medical Museum, for Use during the International Exhibition of 1876, in Connection with the Representatives of the Medical Department, United States Army. Washington, D. C. 1876. 8vo, pp. 52.

An Account of the Worcester Lyceum and Natural History Association. By Nathaniel Paine. Prepared for the International Exhibition, 1876. Worcester. 1876. 8vo, pp. 13.

On some Characters of the Genus *Coryphodon* Owen. By Professor O. C. Marsh. 8vo, pp. 4. (From the *American Journal of Science and Arts*, vol. xi., May, 1876.)

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## GENERAL NOTES.

### BOTANY.<sup>1</sup>

ARRESTED GROWTH AND PERSISTENCE OF *BARBULA RURALIS*. — During a visit made to Ile Royale, Michigan (Lake Superior), in the summer of 1874, my attention was called to a curious example of the

<sup>1</sup> Conducted by PROF. G. L. GOODALE.